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September 24, 2000

U.S.FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office
Attention: Greg Sanders
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura CA 93003-7726

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
SEP 26 2000
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VENTURA, CA

Dear Mr. Sanders,

My comments regarding the alternatives to be considered in the supplemental EIS are based on years of involvement in the politics of the sea otter translocation and 17 years of trap fishing at San Nicolas Island.

Options 1&2 seem to be the only viable options you should be considering.

Option 3 should not be considered for several reasons. First it is a clear violation of the agreement made 13 years ago. During the implementation of the original EIS, criteria for failure was established based on many different scenarios. One of these was if fewer than 25 otters remained at San Nicolas Island after three years the translocation would be considered a failure. I questioned the reasoning for these criteria at the time and was told that the gene pool would be too limited if the otters were multiplying from such a small population. This reasoning certainly cannot be discounted now to accommodate the interests of sea otter advocacy groups. The otter population at San Nicolas Island has been around 12 otters for the last 10 years and apparently many of the pups born there have not thrived. The latest count, (spring 2000) shows 20 otters currently at San Nicolas Island however I spend more time out there than anyone and personally doubt the number is that high. I suggest independent verification needs to be done as to the population at San Nicolas Island before decisions are made.

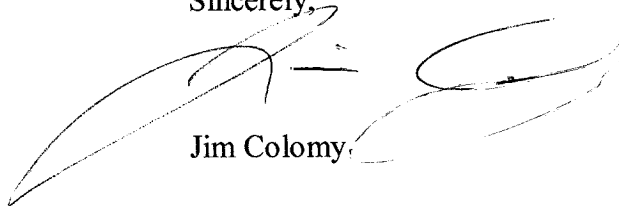
Option 4 should not be considered since it clearly violates the intent of congress who recognized the importance of commercial fishing.

Option 5 should not be considered since this is merely an attempt to place blame for a failed exercise where it doesn't belong. I have stated many times at several public meetings that I have fished at San Nicolas Island for 17 years and pulled over 250,000 traps without a single sea otter take. This includes lobster, crab, and finfish traps since the translocation. During these last 13 years agents of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Calif. Dept of Fish and Game, U.S.

Navy personnel, and an unknown number of environmentalists on San Nicolas Island have observed me. I continue to fish traps at San Nicolas Island secure in the knowledge that this activity poses no threat to the remaining otter population. This option is clearly an attempt to further restrict legal fishing operations and has no basis on facts.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and if you have any questions feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Colomy', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jim Colomy

cc: John R. Twiss Jr.
Marine Mammal Commission
Congresswoman Lois Capps
Mr. Mike Stoker